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VOL. 39—No. 15

SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1861

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ST. JAMES'S HALL.—MISS LOUISA PYNE and M. OLE BULL (the great Violinist), on WEDNESDAY EVENING next, April 17th, at the CONCERT of the VOCAL ASSOCIATION; also Madame LOUISA VINNING, Miss E. HORDER, Miss CHIFFERFIELD, and Miss LASCELLES. Fantasia, Pianoforte, Mr. W. G. CUSINS; Madrigals and Part-Songs by the Choir of 200 Voices; Accompanist, Mr. FRANCESCO BERGER; Conductor, M. BENEDICT. Sofa Stalls, 5s.; Reserve Area and Balcony, 3s.; Unreserved, 1s. At the Ticket Office, 28 Piccadilly.

NEW PHILHARMONIC CONCERTS.—ST. JAMES'S HALL.—Conductor, Dr. WYLD. The SECOND CONCERT of the Tenth Season will take place on MONDAY EVENING, April 22nd. The PUBLIC REHEARSAL on SATURDAY AFTERNOON, April 20th, when will be performed Beethoven's GRAND CHORAL SYMPHONY, and other great instrumental works. Pianist, Mr. C. HALLÉ; violin, M. VIEUXTEMPS.

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—The Directors respectfully announce that the THIRD CONCERT will take place at the Hanover Square Rooms on MONDAY Evening next, the 15th of April. Programme:—Sinfonia in B flat, No. 4 (Haydn); Concerto in E flat, Pianoforte, M. Otto GOLDSCHMIDT (Beethoven); Overture, Athalia (Mendelssohn); Sinfonia Pastorale (Beethoven); Overture, Oberon (Weber). Vocal Performer, Signor Gardoni (his first appearance in England this season). Conductor, Professor STERNDALE BENNETT, Mus. D. To commence at 8 o'clock. Single Tickets, 15s. Subscriptions received and Tickets issued by Messrs. Addison, Holler and Lucas, No. 210 Regent Street.

MR. WALTER MACFARREN'S THREE CONCERTS of Solo and Concerted Pianoforte Music, at the Hanover Square Rooms, on TUESDAY EVENINGS, April 23rd and June 11th, and on SATURDAY MORNING, May 18th. Programme of First Concert:—Duets (Op. 127), Piano and Violin (Spohr); Variations and Finale alla Fuga, Piano (Beethoven); Andante and Scherzo, Piano Duet (Walter Macfarren); Trio in B flat, Piano, Violin, and Violoncello (Mozart); Mazurka and Saltarella, Piano (Walter Macfarren); Duo in D, Piano and Violoncello (Mendelssohn). Violin, Mr. H. BLAGROVE; Violoncello, Signor PIATTI; Piano, Miss LINDLEY and Mr. WALTER MACFARREN. Vocalist, Miss PALMER; Accompanist, Mr. FRANCESCO BERGER. Programme illustrated by Mr. G. A. MACFARREN. Subscription £1 1s.; Single Ticket, 10s. 6d. Of the principal Musicellers, and Mr. Walter Macfarren, 58 Albert Street, Regent's Park, N.W.

M. SAINTON begs to announce that his FIRST SOIREE MUSICALE will take place at his Residence, 5 Upper Wimpole Street, on WEDNESDAY, April 24th, to commence at Half-past Eight o'clock. Programme:—Quartet in E Minor, Op. 45 (Spohr); Aria, "The song of the Quail" (Beethoven); Sonata in D minor, Pianoforte and Violin, first time (Schumann); Quartet in C, No. 9, Opera 39 (Beethoven); Solos, Pianoforte (S. Heller); Song, "Name the glad day" (Dussek); Solo, violin, "Un souvenir" (Sainton). Executants: MM. CHAS. HALLÉ, SAINTON, BEZETH WEBB, and PAQUE. Accompanist, Mr. W. G. CUSINS; Vocalist, Miss BANKS. Tickets to be had of the principal Musicellers, and of M. Sainton, at his Residence. Subscription for the series of Concerts, One Guinea and Half; Single Tickets, Half a Guinea each.

MISS ALICE MANGOLD begs to announce her first MATINEE MUSICALE, at the Hanover Square Rooms, April 17th. Artists: Pianoforte, Miss ALICE MANGOLD; Violin, M. SAINTON; Violoncello, Signor PIATTI; Tenor and Contrabasso, Messrs. WEBB and HOWELL. Vocalists, Miss MARIA DE VILLAR and Mr. W. CUSINS; Pianiste Accompanateur, Mr. FRANCESCO BERGER. Tickets 5s., and Stalls Half a Guinea; to be had of Messrs. ASHDOWN and PARRY, 18 Hanover Square; Messrs. Keith and Prowse, Cheapside; and Miss Alice Mangold, 4 Queen Square, Bloomsbury.

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Reviews.

"The Early History, Theory, and Practice of Vocal Music"
— by JAMES J. GASKIN (Robertson, Dublin; Emery, and Simpkin and Marshall, London).

THE second title of this publication is *"Sight and Part Singing made interesting."* It is a work full of matter, and of interesting matter, in the bargain. Divided into two parts, Part I., after some introductory remarks on the early history of music, it touches on the Ambrosian and Gregorian chants; the Greek and Roman staves; the Guidonian invention and development of modern musical notation; clefs, &c.; remarks on the voice and its management; the origin of the harp, and its connection with Ireland; the analogy of sound and colour, music and painting; contains, moreover, an illustrated register of the human voice, with a tabulated arrangement of the vocal artists of European reputation; references to Wilhem's popular and scientific exercises on intervals illustrated by part songs; solfeggi and exercises on vocalisation. As if this were not enough for one short volume, the second part contains diagrams, illustrative of the chromatic and other scales; refers to *floriture*, transposition, accidentals, modulation, and intervals; the moral obligation of learning to sing, as set forth by Byrd in 1558; solmisation; vocalisation; accentuation; reading in all measures; minor scales—their relation to major scales; ancient modes and psalm tones; includes part songs, &c., selected (or rather arranged) from Rossini, Sabbatini, Beethoven, Mozart, Handel, Durante, Mendelssohn, Wilhem; a summary of the lives and works of those composers; part songs, by T. T. Magrath, Vicar Choral of Christ's and St. Patrick's Cathedrals; R. P. Stewart, Mus. Doc. Conran, Harvey, and Guernsey; concluding with chapters on chanting, and its early practice in the Christian Church. The work is not only interesting and comprehensive, but of absolute utility; the musical illustrations are short, varied, and always to the purpose; and the whole put together so symmetrically, that any section can be immediately referred to—*because* (and here is a point too often overlooked), in such, like compilations (*raisonnées* or *non-raisonnées*, as the case may be), they invariably occur in the right place.

"Dyson's Songs for singing on the March"—(Dyson, Windsor)—is a little volume without pretension, but not without value. It includes the National Anthem, together with 16 songs, with chorus, more or less appropriate (as in the case of "Rule Britannia," and "See the conquering hero comes") and more or less popular (as in the instance of "Lucy Neal," &c.). As a publication in a great measure connected with the volunteer movement (we can't separate music from soldiering) it is welcome.

"Sacred Poetry for private and congregational use," set to music, composed and collected by JOHN HENRY MILLS—(Hughes and Butler)—is chiefly to be recommended for its poetical contents.

"Lucia di Lammermoor;" "Name the glad day;" for the pianoforte—BRINLEY RICHARDS (Chappell and Co.). The first is one of the most elegant and effective (and at the same time, though brilliant and showy, accommodating) fantasies that we have seen constructed on the hackneyed song of the moribund Edgardo. The second is a "transcription" (and one of the author's most highly finished and best) of the beautiful canzonet of Dussek, the revival of which we owe to the Monday Popular Concerts.

"Nay, do not turn away, Effie,"—words by CLARA LOUD, music by C. BORINI (Metzler and Co., London; Pigott, Dublin)—is pretty, and unaffected. *"Forgive and forget,"*—words by * * *, music by C. BORINI (same publishers) is equally pretty, but not equally unaffected. What is gained by having the symphony in F minor, and the song in F major? *"I cannot breathe 'farewell,'"*—words by CLARA LOUD, music by C. BORINI (same publishers)—is pretty and sentimental. We have seen much worse ballads for the drawing-room than these.

"Oh Lord, we beseech Thee"—by FREDERICK SMEE (T. Alfred Novello)—is a musical setting for four voices (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass) of the Collect for the Third Sunday after Trinity ("Oh Lord, we beseech Thee, mercifully hear us") remarkable, in an equal degree, for devotional melody and pure harmony.

"Scotland's Love,"—words and music by WILLIAM BRIDGES (George Emery)—is a ballad, the words of which are superior to the music, though the music is quite as correct as the words. There is nothing very salient in either one or the other.

"Arise, shine, for thy light is come,"—words by ISAIAH, music by THOMAS LLOYD FOWLE (author)—is a very good Christmas anthem for four voices—treble, alto, tenor, and bass.

"The Spring of Life"—words by his son music by W. HUTCHINSON, Esq. (Charles Hallé and Son); *"When the sil'ry Moonbeams sleep"*—music by W. HUTCHINSON, words by an ITALIAN (same publishers).

The words of *"The Spring of Life"* (by Mr. Hutchinson, jun.) are so unobtrusive, and at the same time good, in a strictly poetical sense, that we cannot refrain from quoting them:—

"The spring of life glides quickly by,
When life is young, when life is new;
The days and years too swiftly fly,
When hopes are high and cares are few.
The summer dawns, but now, though bright,
Its sun is often clouded o'er,
And though around it sheds its light,
Imparts the warmth of youth no more.

As fading autumn next draws nigh,
And with it brings the yellow leaf,
Oh! swifter still the years steal by,
With less of joy and more of grief.
With locks of snow comes winter last,
With step infirm and brow of care,
His thoughts now live amid the past,
And memory loves to linger there."

We have no room to quote any of the music.

MUSIC RECEIVED FOR REVIEW.

ASHDOWN AND PARRY.

AGUILAR (EMANUEL)	"Ophelia"	(Pianoforte).
D'ALQUEN (FREDERIC)	"Après l'orage"	(ditto).
HELLER (STEPHEN)	"Declaration"	(ditto).
Ditto	"Amour sans repos"	(ditto).
Ditto	"La chasse"	(ditto).
WEISBECKER (CHARLES)	"Sylvia"	(ditto).

ADDISON, HOLLIER AND LUCAS.

GILBERT (W. B.) "St. John" (Oratorio).
HIME (B.) "The Star of home" (Vocal).

LEADER AND COCK.

LUNN (H. C.) "Adeline" (Pianoforte).

OLIVIER.

EATRES (W. H.) "Our sister Mary" (Vocal).

SCHOTT AND CO.

GOLDBERRY (G. P.) "Viena la barca è pronta" (Vocal).
SIVRAI (JULES DE) "Conuelo" (Pianoforte).

SMITH AND WHINKUP (Leeds).
 STEELE (J.) "Cecilia polka" (Pianoforte).
 Ditto. "Primrose polka" (ditto).
 Ditto. "Lincoln polka" (ditto).

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS ON TANNHAUSER.

[The following lively account of Herr Wagner's attempt to win the suffrages of the Parisians for his *Tannhäuser* is from the pen of M. Oscar Commettant.—Ed. M. W.]

After being under study for six months, and a considerable number of rehearsals, *Tannhäuser* has at last made its appearance on our first lyrical stage. Never in the memory of the oldest dilettante had public curiosity been excited to an equal pitch; and next to the recognition by the Italian parliament of a kingdom of Italy, and of Victor Emmanuel as the sovereign of the said kingdom, I know of no other great European event, save the first performance, at the Imperial Academy of Music, of Herr Wagner's work. For the last three months, nothing has been talked of but the solemn ordeal which was to decide the fate of the Music of the Future, and, consequently for the future. Foreign amateurs in large numbers flocked to Paris last week to judge for themselves of the effect of *Tannhäuser* on the French organisation. It has been asserted that pleasure trains were to be provided, which were to bring to Paris, on the most moderate terms, the crowd of Prussian, Austrian, and Belgian amateurs, who could not sleep for anxiety about the fate of *Tannhäuser*. In order to give a characteristic appearance to these trains, one of the railway officials had proposed as a delicate compliment, that the different locomotives should bear the names of the several distinctive features in Herr Wagner's music. Thus, that there should be the *Discord*, the *Tremulo*, the *Enharmonic*, the *Chromatic*, the *Endless Melody*, &c. Considerations of the most serious concern to all the governments of Europe alone stood in the way of realising this happy scheme. The more is the pity. The merry pilgrims of *Tannhäuser* will have no other resource than to read the articles giving an account of the first performance of this work which took place, as did the second, in the midst of hisses, laughter, and a lively interchange of ironical remarks kept up by the spectators from every part of the house, who vied in noisiness and warmth of zeal with a formidable claque, diverting the orchestra from its task, and throwing the singers into confusion.

Undoubtedly, if Herr Wagner had not, by numerous writings, published in Germany and France, revealed his contempt for the great masters, past and present, and had he not, with incredible self-esteem, upheld his system of lyrical composition as the *ne plus ultra* of the beautiful, and set up his own operas as alone worthy to be listened to by persons of serious thought, the Parisian public, naturally kind and courteous, would have been content to receive with unbroken silence, the shapeless, lustreless, and defective work of the unfortunate composer. But boundless pretensions, with nothing to justify them, required an exemplary lesson, and by protesting against being invaded by this puffed-up Germanic Muse, the public has no doubt intended at the same time to make amends to our national composers, too frequently contemned in France, where the hospitality extended to certain foreigners reaches a point which is often ridiculous as well as unjust.

We shall not attempt an analysis of the several pieces of music—are they pieces of music?—which constitute this immense loud-sounding wind bag now too generally known under the name of *Tannhäuser*. Such a task would be hopeless. Enough to say that, setting aside the overture, the second part of which, it is true, seems expressive of a scene of revival-convulsionists—not the most pleasant thing to listen to—but the first part of which is a grand inspiration; setting aside the march broadly designed and pompously instrumented, but which has the defect of being written in imitation of the style of Weber and Rossini—there are the very triplets in it of the great master so much ridiculed by Herr Wagner and all his followers; setting aside a poetic romanza for a barytone; setting aside finally certain felicitous accents, certain good orchestral effects, and here and there a few fragments of melody scattered throughout the work with a hopeless parsimony, if it be not systematic, the whole of this score of the apostle of the new school is a confused mass of sonorous antitheses, pretentious and out-of-the-

way combinations, dissonances, metaphysics, obscurity and chaos. No one endowed with the musical faculty composes in this way naturally; now Herr Wagner has proved by several rhythmically constructed, and sufficiently melodious pieces, that he could, were his mind unshackled, write good music after the common fashion of the world; but evidently Herr Wagner, carried away by a horror of the commonplace, and perhaps despairing ever to achieve celebrity by following the path triumphantly trodden by the masters of the art, has set up a system of his own, under favour of which he has composed his operas. Herr Wagner, I am well aware, pretends, on the contrary, to have determined the laws of his system after having written his scores; but I think he may make a mistake. However this may be, after the notorious failure of the music of *Tannhäuser*, the only part of Herr Wagner's work capable of inspiring any interest for the future, is precisely his system of lyrical drama, of which, however, *Tannhäuser* supplies but an imperfect idea, as the true type of a lyrical drama should, according to the initiator of its principles, endure three or six days, and be purged of all that constitutes melody, that is to say rhythm, equilibrium of design, rests of cadence and half cadence, accentuation of phrases logically balanced, &c. It is easy to see how mad the notion is, and therefore how incapable of realisation. But perhaps this may have been an additional reason for taking it up, and, most certainly, it was a good way of attracting universal attention towards the inventor of such a system, and stirring up a hubbub round his name.

We may next regard it as just possible that Herr Wagner is in reality convinced of the excellence of his method, and that he looks upon himself as a martyr through ignorance and bad taste. In man everything is possible, and the perversions of the human mind are without limit, when the mind is not kept within the bounds of truth by common sense, that supreme characteristic of genius and indispensable accompaniment of the creative faculty, without which imagination is but a hot fit of the brain. But to convey a notion of the system on which the operas of Herr Wagner are based is not an easy task, and on the part of the reader will require close and persevering attention. This degree of attention I make bold to request of the reader, observing that once and away does not constitute a practice.

From all I have heard, seen, read and sang of Herr Wagner, who, as all know, writes the *libretti* of his own operas, this is what I arrive at. According to this celebrated innovator, all melodies hitherto known, not excepting even the theme of the *funeral march* in the heroic symphony of Beethoven, are merely dance-airs, inasmuch as they are rhythmical, logically planned, accentuated according to the laws of *cæsure* in music, and divided into several members of phrases, whereof some are *antecedent* and the others *consequent*. In the marvellous developments of the symphonies of Beethoven, Herr Wagner sees merely an idealisation of dance-melody, and there are entire portions of these immortal symphonies which, to the sense of the author of *Tannhäuser*, are only dancing tunes in the primitive form of ballet-music. It is true that the music of *Tannhäuser* does not set one dancing or singing either. But we will quote Herr Wagner himself, as we shall have to do more than once, in order to render our explanations clear, and avoid all suspicion of malicious interpretation:—

"The symphony of Beethoven contains, moreover, in that part which is designated by the name of *scherzo* or of *minuetto*, a true dance-music in the primitive form, and one could perfectly well dance to it. It is as if a powerful instinct had constrained the composer to touch, at least once in the course of his work, directly on the principle on which it rests, pretty much as one feels with the foot, the bath into which a plunge is about to be made."

As may be naturally concluded, it is quite another sort of bath into which Herr Wagner plunges when he takes his baths of harmony; he, who has not shrunk from writing that the operas of all known masters are to his own operas what the monkey is to man. Dancing! there, forsooth, is the root of all the evil; for if there had been no dancing, there would have been no composers, and if there were no composers, Herr Wagner would be the greatest of musicians. Oh, this dancing! this dancing! this it is which has been the death of religious music; this is what has given to the symphonies of Beethoven that skipping, playful cha-

acter with which you are acquainted; this, again, it is which has held enchained in its rosy bonds the poems of operas, which are, to speak correctly, but a sort of spoken dance.

"The original and popular dance, which springs out of the most material relations, conceived in its most abundant development, and carried out to the manifestation of the inmost movements of the soul, is nothing else than dramatic action."

Diavolo! So then love, which is the great moving power of dramatic action, is merely a dance. The dance of sentiment, no doubt, in which two hearts, making *vis-à-vis* to each other, cut capers and perform *chassez-croisez!* But then, how account for the celebrated lines in *Richard Cœur de Lion*—

"Ce n'est pas la danse que j'aime,
Mais c'est la fille à Nicolas."

Be it as it may, we have it from Herr Wagner, who expresses himself with the proud disdain of thorough conviction, and who has never given in to the weakness of dancing:—

"Ballet is the worthy brother of opera; it is of the same age, and it is born of the same defective principle. Thus do we see them, as though to conceal each the weak points of the other, walking together hand in hand and step for step."

"Step for step" is pretty. Herr Wagner likes a joke. Why does he not like singing in our fashion? "But," you will perhaps ask, "what, then, ought the poetry of a lyrical work to express in order to conform with the ideas of Herr Wagner?"—"Nothing at all." "How do you mean, nothing?"—"Why, nothing, I say again;" for, says Herr Wagner—

"The greatness of the poet is measured chiefly by what he abstains from saying, in order that we may have the opportunity of saying to ourselves in silence that which is inexpressible."

In England that which is inexpressible is a pair of pantaloons or a shirt; but this is not likely to be the meaning of our author. What, then, has he in his mind? Let me ask. Howsoever it be, and granted that poets, to show themselves great, should say nothing, there would be no lack of great poets; for the greater number, alas! speak more often than not only to say nothing. We have seen the part which is allotted to poetry in operas, according to the theory of Herr Wagner. Here now is what music ought to be:—

"It is music which causes to be clearly understood what is not said, and the inevitable form of its resounding silence is infinite melody."

Nothing can be clearer than this, so perfectly true is it that clearness is one of the grand qualities of the music, no less than of the theories of the anti-saltatory school. Who can fail to understand this? Melody speaking for the poet, who is silent, and forming thus an infinite melody in the inevitable form of resounding silence. At all events, as it is just possible that you may not quite follow the thread of this marvellous precept, let us, borrowing one of the most luminous pages of Herr Wagner's book, learn to appreciate the cause by showing what is the effect. A man must be without a kreutzer's or a scudo's worth of ideality in his soul, and moreover, must be an unbridled dancer, not to be convinced that the music of Wagner is the only music possible, after having read the following:—

"Once more I resort to metaphor, in order to characterise, by way of conclusion, the grand form of melody, such as I conceive it, which embraces the entire dramatic work; and to answer for this, I refer to the impression which it must necessarily produce. The infinitely varied detail which it presents must be revealed not only to the connoisseur but to the profane, to the most primitive nature, so soon as it has attained to the required degree of collectiveness. It should, therefore, in the first instance, beget in the soul a mood such as is produced by a beautiful forest at sunset, to the stroller who has just escaped from the hubbub of town. This impression, the analysis of which I leave the reader to effect according to his own experience, in all its psychological results, consists—and this is what is peculiar about it—in the perception of a silence growing more and more eloquent. It in general suffices to the object of art to have produced this fundamental impression, to govern by it the hearer unconsciously, and so to prepare him for a higher design; this impression spontaneously awakens within him these higher tendencies. He who is strolling in the province subdued by this general impression yields himself then to a more durable meditative condition; his facul-

ties, disenthralled from the tumult and din of town, bend themselves up and acquire a new mode of perception; endowed, so to speak, with a new sense, his ear becomes more and more acute; he discriminates with an increasing distinctness the voices, infinite in their variety, which awaken to his sense in the forest; he hears some which it seems to him he has never before heard; as they become more numerous, they also in a strange fashion grow in intensity; the sounds become more resonant; by degrees, as he hears a greater number of separate voices, of different modes, he still recognises in these sounds, which disentangle themselves, swell, and subdue him, the same great, one melody which from the outset had inspired him with a religious feeling. It is as though on a lovely night the fathomless azure of the firmament riveted his gaze; the more unreservedly he yields himself to this spectacle, the more the starry hosts of the celestial dome shine in his eyes, distinct, clear, radiant, innumerable. This melody would leave an eternal echo within him, but to repeat it would be impossible. To hear it once more he must return to the forest; he must return thither at sunset. What madness would it be to endeavour to seize one of the graceful songsters of the forest, to take it home and seek to train it, and teach it a fragment of the great melody of nature! What could he hear then but some melody à l'Italienne?"

Poor Italian melody!—Herr Wagner spurns it! Yet it has never troubled itself about him, nor is it this which disfigures *Tannhäuser*, nor the *Phantom Ship*, nor *Lohengrin*, nor *Tristan et Isolde*. But this is not what I wished to speak about. Do you remember poor Jullien, of eccentric memory, the author of the waltz *Rosita*? He had that faith which moves mountains and big drums, and bestows that new sense mentioned by Herr Wagner. Jullien had often heard that great symphony of nature which the ear catches in the forest, and he succeeded in noting from memory the most mysterious of the notes in that *Tannhäuser* of the goddess. One day, after a concerted piece, by the side of which the second finale of the "Battle of Singers" at Wartburg was mere child's play for the commixture of the sounds and the infinitude of the melody, Jullien was struck with an extremely grave sound, like the eternal pedal note of that secular symphony. Jullien directed his whole attention to it; appealed to that new sense which is, in the moral organisation of the apostles of the music of the future, what the tail with an eye at the end is to the physical organisation of the man of the future foreseen by Fourier, and the sometime *chef d'orchestre* of the Café Turc heard unmistakably the sound which is emitted by this our globe as it rolls through space. The note was C, three octaves lower than the C written in the bass clef on the second line below the line. One may easily imagine how delighted Jullien was at this discovery. He communicated it to Humboldt, who congratulated him in the most flattering terms. It is possible, therefore, notwithstanding the opinion expressed by Herr Wagner, to note down the sounds of the universal concert, when, as in the case of Jullien, one has the power of concentrating the faculties, and thus acquiring a new sense.

Pardon this episode. I now return to the system of Herr Wagner. According to Herr Wagner, music is only the ideal form of uttered poetry, and in lyrical drama words and music interfuse to such a degree as to form but one and the same thing. But in order to arrive at this result, which rather appertains to chemistry than to art, the expressive ideal must predominate alone in the speech and in the action of the personages, who are to have nothing of humanity but the form, and are to be regarded by the spectators as merely abstractions. The object of the personages of the drama is, as may be seen, far less to represent an action in which an interest is taken, as in all other pieces for the stage, than to furnish to an attentive and thought-collected audience, as in a forest, the fitting explanations by which to follow the various stages of the musical legend, unrolling itself in the orchestra like a sound tone-picture. Hence those interminable ritornellas claiming to awaken in the mind of the hearers those sentiments poetry would be powerless to express, and which only lengthen out the performance, attacking the nervous system, and filling the house with an atmosphere of boredom which no Frenchman is capable of standing. Herr Wagner calls this infinite melody; he had done better to call it indefinite. That a man alone in a forest should give way to a dreamy mood, listen to the rustling of the leaves, the sighing of the breeze, and allow himself to be gently swayed by the zephyr in a semi-extatic condition, I can perfectly understand; but it is not in a playhouse, where so many different objects are vying to

engage the attention, that one is led to withdraw within one's self, in order to frame the soul for the reception of the confused and fugitive impressions of music which is without any determinate form, full, it is true, of good intentions, but rarely attaining their fulfilment. Everything has its right place; and so long as men are men, they will not hurry over their dinners, put on a white neckcloth, and don a dress-coat, in order to go into the boxes of a theatre, and dream, with their heads propped upon their hands, over the subtleties of a musical poesy propounded to the sagacity of the audience in the manner of a sonorous *rebus*. What is wanted at a theatre is a drama of absorbing interest, clearly expounded, skilfully conducted, developed and brought to a close with power, and which shall allow the musician free scope, not for his sentimental dreams, in their nature likely to interest no one but himself, but for the well-defined emotions of the heart; and as variety is one of the chief elements of theatrical music, there must be, side by side with the great manifestations of passion, graceful pieces, various in character, charming the ear and sustaining the attention. To seek to reduce lyrical personages to the condition of abstractions, as regards the sentiment they express poetically, and to that of walking and talking clarinets, flutes, or bassoons, as regards the musical parts they are to play in the general whole of the musical conception, is simply to annihilate opera instead of regenerating it, and converting artists into so many machines, so many living programmes.

Now the invention of Herr Wagner consists in turning opera into an instrumental symphony, with an *obligato* accompaniment by the singers. But will not a singer on the stage always prove more interesting than an instrument in the orchestra? And if, in virtue of being a living, intelligent being, he interests the spectators in a higher degree than a bassoon or a clarinet in the orchestra, ought he not to have a special part chalked out for him? and is it reasonable to doom him to the office of the old telegraphic machine's gesticulation, without uttering a word, while the instruments speak for him? In plain truth, it is hard to conceive how such a system as this could have found favour with any public in its senses, even for a single day. But I will go further. I say that, if opera such as Herr Wagner conceives it is impossible in practice, in a merely musical point of view it presents no resources in a serious acceptation. What is it, in sooth, that Herr Wagner desires? To extend the scope of melody, by imparting to dramatic music the fullness and interest of the symphony. The symphonist, says Herr Wagner, still timidly clings to the primitive dancing form; he never ventured to lose sight, even for the sake of expression, of the paths which kept up his relations with that form; and here now is the poet crying out to him—

"Launch without fear upon the unlimited waves, upon the broad sea of music! Grapple me by the hand, and you will never wander away from that which is most of all intelligible to every man; for with me you still continue on the *terra firma* of dramatic action, and that action represented on the stage is the clearest and most easily understood of all poems. Open wide, then, the channels of your melody; let it pour forth like a torrent continuously athwart the entire work; express thereby what I do not say, because you alone can say it; and my silence will say all, because I am leading you by the hand."

How can a musician of the worth of Herr Wagner (for, after all, Herr Wagner is a man of infinite talent) talk in this way? Has Herr Wagner forgotten that the great, so to speak, the sole interest of the symphony consists in the development of a given theme which serves, as it were, as a thesis on which the composer comments. Can any one imagine a symphony without unity of thought, and without that ingenious play between the several parts which establishes a sort of pleasant, and often witty, conversation between the several instruments, upon the topic of conservation, upon the theme? Certainly no; and no one can seriously doubt it. Well, these ingenious developments of a principal subject are simply impossible, directly it is laid down that the music is to follow a dramatic and scenic action. For effectively, as step by step the action advances, the personages involved necessarily express different sentiments, and the music which has to express these, must, perforce, change in character; consequently, there is an end to unity of sentiment, an end to the development of a musical parent-idea. The system of lyrical drama imagined by Herr Wagner is, therefore, to be condemned from both points of

view, the dramatic and the musical, and as a bad cause is always followed by a bad effect, the music of Herr Wagner is deplorable, notwithstanding the talent of the artist, which, as I have said, is very great. Tried by logic, as by the ear, Herr Wagner is condemned. He can never find any advocates but among a few fanatics, such as every cause can boast of, and among impotent musicians, who, not having the capacity to write a *restricted melody*, find it convenient to produce one that is *infinite*, that is to say, to write no melody at all, while they claim to be considered profound thinkers and sublime composers.

Herr Wagner thought to win a triumph at the opera; he only raised a riot. What shall I say of the artists? What Napoleon I. said to his vanquished foes. "All honour to ill-fated courage!" They did their best; and possibly Herr Niemann may have a fine voice, and sing well. No one can tell. As to the orchestra, it proved that alongside of military courage and civic courage, there is a third kind—musical courage.

OSCAR COMMETTANT.

MUSIC AT PESTH.*

We would fain inscribe Joachim's name in letters of fire in the heaven of art, for all those who have sought only passing comets and meteors—where a vivifying sun sends forth its warm beams. Let us allow the most glorious phenomena of a single day, with their satellites and attendant moons, to pass by; they never loved art, and were never penetrated with its sunny rays, for the light with which they shone played on the surface only, while all within is cold and dark. What is Hecuba to them? If, by means of the hollow Trojan horse of their vanity and desire to please, they can subdue the multitude, the Troy of art itself may afterwards be ruined, and the high queen perish, for what they care. Among the very few apostles of music who preach the pure unsophisticated doctrine of the divinity, and whose soul is filled with faith and enthusiasm, we must reckon, without question—Joseph Joachim. Look at him yonder, with his quiet, unpretending demeanour, externally resembling a bronze statue, though he is inwardly a flaming volcano, which speaks electrically, through his finger-tips, to your heart! Not producing momentary heat, but permanent warmth; not dazzling but illuminating, not merely extensive, but much rather intensive—such is Joachim's play. That he is the greatest violinist of the day is a fact attested by all who by greatness, understand—greatness of soul. What coyness, incomparable purity and neatness, there is in his execution! It seems as though Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven, whose quartets he plays in such an unrivalled manner, could all be heard at once, in his feeling and ravishing tones. In the most difficult passages, or in the simple sustained tone, it is the same—in every instance we find song; in every instance the deeply penetrating determination to produce music, and music alone; nowhere is there the slightest ostentation displayed in difficult and rapid passages, which the unprofessional hearer does not remark—nay, the existence of which he does not even suspect—and which sweep by us with the same placid repose as a fleet upon the wide ocean. Of all living violinists, Joachim is the most perfect representative of the classical style; nay, his whole being is classicism and sterling merit itself. With the greatest outward calm he executes the most elevating, feeling, and powerful productions that musical art can produce. Not only do the great composers live again in him, but also the old Italian violinists, such as Tartini, Pugnani, &c., telling us how, in times gone by, they played and trilled before the devil himself.—*Trille du Diable*.

It is vain we listen for the most distant approach to a false note; it is in vain we wait for the slightest trick, such as those now practised by modern virtuosos, who, by false sentimentality, by distorting the notes, or by inordinately raising or lowering them, parody the feelings; it is in vain we seek to read on his features how difficult this or that passage is; it is not thus that he announces what he is going to play; he expresses it in eloquent, true, and warm words. It is not, however, only as an instrumentalist that he occupies the highest position; he does so also as a composer, as he has proved by his "Concerto in Ungarischer Weise." Thus artistically and, above all, nobly connected, Hungarian music has a truly great future in store for it. Joachim has taught us how great and elevating a work of art may be created out of the pregnant materials of Hungarian music, rendered on the violin. This is the means by which the type of Hungarian national music will ripen into artistically historical and universal significance; and we have a double reason for being delighted that Hungary possesses in its patriotic countryman a great instrumental artist, who bears

* From the Pesth Lloyd-Zeitung.

the spirit of Hungarian music upon eagle's pinions through the wide world.

The concerto consists of three parts: "Allegro maestoso," "Romance," and "Finale à la Zingara." We might fancy we were enjoying the effect produced by a symphony of Schumann's, in so correct and searching a mode has Joachim treated his Hungarian theme. The solo violin is the Speaker of the House, who descends from his official chair to commence with the other members—the orchestra parts—the debate, the members often obtaining, with their objections, the best of the argument. But the logic of reason, respect for the laws, and perseverance achieve a victory. The sparklingly free fancy of the first movement is succeeded by a wonderfully beautiful romance, while in the last movement the ennobled shades of Lavata, Csermák, Bihari, and Rózsavölgyi flit up and down, in inspiring staccatos and runs, before us. The difficulties to be overcome in playing this concerto can be appreciated only by violinists. The success achieved by its performance was truly something extraordinary; we trust it may induce the "composer," Joachim, to continue his labours in this branch of his art, to the greater glory of his fatherland and of Hungarian music. Bach's *Chaconne* and Tartini's *Teufelssöhne* were the other pieces selected by the concert-giver. Did we not fear having already afforded the artist's extraordinary modesty grounds for recrimination by the above true, though weak, expression of our feelings, we would speak only in dihyrambic verse; but we forbear, and on this occasion will praise the audience, who knew how to honour not only patriotic sentiments but art in the artist—art which, it is true, by the way, streamed forth with most overwhelming power. Bach's *Chaconne*, notwithstanding the fact that Schumann and Mendelssohn wrote pianoforte accompaniments for it, is certainly more characteristic without any accompaniment at all, as it originally stood, and as Joachim played it. The combination of the conflicting parts, the strong and truly antique conception, and the sublime earnestness of the old master, can be grasped only after such an interpretation of them. Who can have played this difficult piece in Bach's lifetime, we wonder? We fancy that the *Chaconne* could, in those days, have been performed as a trio or quartet at the utmost. A no less sterling composition is Tartini's *Trille du Diable*. The inspiration and poetry exhibited in the execution of the first andante movement, which is so unaffectedly simple, weigh down a whole legion of virtuoso-tricks. The last movement with the double trill which the devil played to Tartini in the latter's dream, and whence the sonata afterwards sprang, enjoyed, in truth, a demoniacal success. The audience, even when the piece had been repeated, would hardly leave the rooms. But who likes to part with such an artist, who keeps in his magic bow a host of spirits, all obeying the soul of their master, Mlle. Mértý kindly assisted the concert-giver by singing several songs.

BERLIN.—The Singakademie gave, at their last concert, Rudolph Schachner's oratorio, *Israel's Return*, a work preceded by so favourable a report as to excite great expectations in musical circles. Emanuel Geibel has arranged the text from Moore's "Sacred Songs," with connecting passages from Holy Scripture. The oratorio describes in four cantos, named respectively "Captivity," "Deliverance," "Reconciliation," and "Promise;" Israel's fall into sin and subjugation, its release from the Babylonish captivity, the returning favour of God, and His call to His chosen people. The idea of the oratorio has, in the oldest times of church-music, found the most various interpretations; and in the freedom which the composer has permitted himself with regard to the old-established style of church-music, we cannot therefore see any authorised subversion of its principles, nor can we in any way represent the work as faulty in its own peculiar department. With regard to the strictness and form of the music, the composer as a rule adheres to the main conditions of the oratorio; he oversteps, however, in many respects, the customary uniformity of the biblical-elegiac mode of composition, and gives to his work the general lyric form, which produces more warmth, and excites more deeply the sensibilities of the hearer. In but one instance have we to criticise the composer for having overstepped the usual limits in this respect; it is in the quartet and chorus at the end of the second part, "So when the dread clouds of anger." Here he has exceeded the general boundaries of sacred music, and has fallen into the operatic style. The general impression of the work is, however, that the composer has been perfectly equal to his difficult task, and that he has gained for himself a good name among the first composers of sacred music of the past and present. We think more highly of the work, as it moves in a certain freedom of invention, without in any way transgressing the main principles of its allotted sphere. A most imposing effect is produced by the choruses of male voices in unisons, with orchestral accompaniment, quasi-recitative, a style we meet sometimes in Glück's and Weber's works. In its lyrical element, the work is

remarkably rich and exciting; it is likewise so in the language of sound, whether in expressing the deepest feelings, or in describing the situation. The effect of Herr Schachner's being perfect master of the most modern instrumental effects assists not a little in giving this work an advantage over many solid older compositions. Schachner's inventive genius and his thorough musical accomplishments are most fully seen in the chorus, No. 12, "Go forth to the mount," with the (as fugato treated) "Since the time." We hope soon again to have the pleasure of hearing this well-deserving work. As to its performance by the Akademie, we may say that it was performed in such a manner as to procure the best introduction to the composer's work. The solos, in the hands of Mad. Harriers Wippert, Fraulein Boer, Herren Geyer and Krause, left nothing to desire.—*Berliner Blatt*.

Letter to the Editor.

THE MINOR SCALE.

SIR,—Several weeks ago you published a letter on the minor scale by Mr. W. C. Filby, containing some very startling theories.

I felt much opposed to the principles he endeavoured to inculcate, although he argued them very cleverly. The letter, however, caused me to study the matter somewhat minutely; and, against my own previous convictions, I am compelled to confess that Mr. Filby's ideas are correct.

I found that by using this scale the harmonies became essentially different. Several fine combinations result from a permanent use of this mode; and these would never have come under my notice but for the letter referred to.

Now I am anxious to know if Mr. Filby would favour me, and musicians generally, with a detailed statement of his ideas of the harmonies generated from this scale both as a melody and as a bass. I am sure that this would be deeply interesting to all who are anxious to test this scale.

I have found numerous instances where French and German classics have adhered to this mode in their compositions, and I am only glad that the principle has been mooted.

Believe me, sir, yours, obediently,

AUGMENTED TONE.

MR. RANSFORD'S ANNUAL CONCERT.—This entertainment, for the last few years invariably one of the longest and most exciting of the spring season, was given on Tuesday evening, the 2nd instant, at St. James's Hall, and attracted an overflowing attendance. The bill of fare was rich enough to submit to an imperial gourmand. As for the singers, they were Misses Augusta Thompson, Poole, Eyles, Ransford, Marian, Moss, C. Williams, Rebecca Isaacs, Eliza Hughes, Mr. Wells, Mrs. Hamilton Lee, Mad. Sainton-Dolby, Messrs. Geo. Perren, John Morgan, Allan Irving, Wm. Merriek, and Ransford; while the instrumentalists, less numerous but still more remarkable, comprised Miss Arabella Goddard, M. Vieuxtemps, and Mr. Lazarus—an incomparable trio. To note all the achievements of the singers would be to levy a small tax on the readers' patience, which we are loth to do even when urged. Let us say that Mr. Ransford sang his own most characteristic maritime effusion, "The King of the Sea" and Dibdin's "True courage" with a force and pithiness worthy the most musical tar in the British Navy; that Miss Ransford introduced a new song by Mr. Hatton, called "The Future Flower;" that Mad. Sainton-Dolby sang another new ballad by Stephen Glover, entitled, "I love the morn;" that Miss Arabella Goddard and M. Vieuxtemps played Dussek's sonata in B flat (so frequently introduced at the Monday Popular Concerts), Miss Goddard, moreover, performing Mr. Benedict's admirable new fantasia of "Albion" (composed expressly for her) with prodigious success and a unanimous encore (to which, Sims Reeves-like, she refused assent); and the gentleman his own solo on "Patrick's Day;" and that the band of the Coldstream Guards performed various selections from popular operas. We have said enough to show of what materials the entertainment was made, and how easy it was to account for the crowded state of the hall. The accompanists were Herren Wilhelm Ganz and Emile Berger.

ST. JAMES'S HALL,

(REGENT STREET AND PICCADILLY.)

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.

THE SEVENTEENTH CONCERT OF THE THIRD SEASON
(58TH CONCERT IN ST. JAMES'S HALL)

WILL TAKE PLACE

ON MONDAY EVENING, APRIL 15, 1861,

The Programme to be selected from the Works of

VARIOUS COMPOSERS.

PROGRAMME.

PART I.—Grand Overture, in E flat, Op. 20, for four Violins, two Violas, and two Violoncellos (for the last time this season), MM. VIEUXTEMPS, RIES, CARROUS, WATSON, SCHREURS, WEBB, PAQUE, and PIATTI (Mendelssohn); Song, "O cara imagine," Mr. Tennant (Mozart); Sonata in A flat, Op. 26, containing the Funeral March (No. 12 of Hallé's Edition), for Pianoforte Solo (first time at the Monday Popular Concerts), M^r. CHARLES HALLÉ (Beethoven).

PART II.—Sonata in B flat, for Pianoforte and Viola, Mr. Charles HALLÉ and M. VIEUXTEMPS (Vieuxtemps); Song, "The Garland," Mr. Tennant (Mendelssohn); Double Quartet, in E Minor, Op. 87, No. 3.—1st Quartet, MM. VIEUXTEMPS, CARROUS, SCHREURS, and PIATTI; 2nd Quartet, MM. RIES, WATSON, WEBB, and PAQUE (Spohr).

Conductor — Mr. BENEDICT.

To commence at Eight o'clock precisely.

Stalls, 5s.; Balcony, 3s.; Unreserved Seats, 1s.

Tickets to be had of Mr. Austin, at St. James's Hall, 28 Piccadilly; Messrs. Cramer, Beale, and Chappell, 201 Regent Street; Keith, Provost, and Co., 48 Cheapside; Chappell and Co., 50 New Bond Street; and of the principal music-sellers.

ST. JAMES'S HALL.—MR. CHARLES HALLÉ'S
BEETHOVEN RECITALS.—Mr. Charles Hallé begs to announce that he intends giving EIGHT PERFORMANCES OF CLASSICAL PIANOFORTE MUSIC, in the large Room of St. James's Hall, on the afternoons of the subjoined dates:—Friday, May 17th; Friday, May 24th; Friday, May 31st; Friday, June 7th; Friday, June 14th; Friday, June 21st; Friday, June 28th; and Friday, July 5th.—To commence each day at Three o'clock precisely.

The Programmes will be exclusively devoted to the Sonatas composed by Beethoven, for Pianoforte without accompaniment—the whole to be introduced in regular succession, according to the original order of their publication, for which the numbered "Operas" respectively assigned to them are warrants. The universal popularity of these works in England, as elsewhere, and their admitted superiority to all other compositions of the class to which they belong, support Mr. Hallé in the belief that such an uninterrupted presentation of the entire series may elicit the attention both of students and of connoisseurs. Many of the Sonatas never having been publicly performed, though familiar to professors, are unknown to the majority of amateurs; and some of these are quite as worthy admiration as others which, owing to their frequent appearance in concert programmes, have obtained unanimous acceptance.

As exemplifications of the gradual advance of their composer's talent, from its early stages to its ripe maturity, the Pianoforte Sonatas of Beethoven may be consulted as advantageously as the Quartets or the Orchestral Symphonies. They begin at the commencement of his "First" manner, play a very conspicuous part in his "Second," and extend far into the meridian of his "Third." No less than thirty-two in number, there are enough of them to illustrate, more or less pointedly, every phase of the great musician's artistic progress; and, if merely regarded as a series of compositions for a single instrument, in variety, beauty, and originality, they stand wholly unparalleled.

At each of the Eight Performances two Vocal Pieces will be introduced. The Programmes will contain descriptions, historical and analytical, of the Sonatas as they occur. The object aimed at in these descriptions—from which criticism will, as a matter of course, be excluded—is not to guide the taste, but to assist the appreciation of the audience.

Pricing of Admission:—Sofa Stalls (numbered and reserved), for the series, 2s. 2s.; single ticket, 10s. 6d. Reserved Seats (Balcony and Area) for the series, 1s. 1s.; single ticket, 5s. Unreserved Seats, for the series, 1s.; single ticket, 3s.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—In resigning the future Direction of Italian Opera at Her Majesty's Theatre, Mr. E. T. Smith feels bound to explain to his Subscribers, and the Public generally, who have honoured him with their patronage in all his various transactions as a Manager, the reasons that induce him to abandon a speculation upon which he originally entered with a thorough conviction of the most satisfactory results. The enormous outlay which unforeseen circumstances, superfluous to enumerate, compelled him to incur, placed Mr. E. T. Smith, with respect to Her Majesty's Theatre, in a position affording him little or no hope of a successful pecuniary issue. Amid outwardly seeming prosperity, his losses were unprecedentedly severe, which led to the inevitable conclusion that, even with crowded houses night after night, the likelihood of a balance ever being struck to his advantage was far too remote to be taken into account. Yielding to the advice of many influential friends, Mr. E. T. Smith has therefore relinquished an undertaking which, while presenting imminent chances of a reverse, offered, on the other hand, such slender probabilities of an ultimately favourable turn. In adopting this resolution, he confidently appeals to the generous sympathy of those kind patrons to whom he is already so deeply indebted, believing that his motives in thus honourably retiring from an enterprise which must, in the end, have involved liabilities difficult, if not impossible, to meet, will be unanimously appreciated. Tendering his heartfelt thanks for the liberal support he has received, and entreating a hope that it may continue to be accorded him in other undertakings, the success of which mainly depends upon the countenance and encouragement of the public, Mr. E. T. Smith takes leave to announce that there will be no performance of Italian Opera at Her Majesty's Theatre, under his Direction, in the course of the present Season.

Her Majesty's Theatre, April 6, 1861.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

GNAT.—His letter shall appear in our next number.

OETZMANN and Co.—Next week.

B. ALTHAUS.—The songs have not come to hand.

HENRY SMART.—"Smudge."

SHOULDER.—Seventy-three.

NOTICES.

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To CONCERT GIVERS.—No Benefit-Concert, or Musical Performance, except of general interest, unless previously Advertised, can be reported in THE MUSICAL WORLD.

The Musical World.

LONDON: SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1861.

SOME of the most enthusiastic of English musicians have asked the question, "Why there should not be a competition for Music, as well as Painting and Sculpture, in the approaching Exhibition of the Fine Arts!" and a letter, we believe, has been addressed to head-quarters, calling upon the Royal Commissioners to give the subject their most earnest consideration, and directing attention to the error that has been committed and the injury likely to be inflicted. At the first blush, indeed, it would appear that there is no small cause for complaint. The works of the painter and sculptor are to be submitted to examination before competent judges, and prizes and medals to be awarded to those adjudged most excellent in their craft. Galleries are to be set aside for both arts, and the utmost publicity will be given to every accomplishment of pencil and chisel. As far as regards the new Exhibition of Arts in the distribution of "prizes and rewards," it is well to be able to use a brush or know how to cut stone; but altogether useless to know how to compose Music. Music is a myth to the Royal Commissioners; its professors unrecognised—its influence, its very existence, ignored. Music, Painting, and Sculpture have, from time immemorial, been denominated "Sisters," yet the authorities of the Exposition not only deny the consanguinity, but displace the eldest-born altogether. Why should not musicians be irate at this seeming paradox? Why should they remain placid under a slight which amounts to a denunciation? Why rest satisfied until their wrongs be redressed? It is very natural that the followers of Music—all save the most cautious and logical—should feel the offence and cry out. In their quickness and sensitiveness, nevertheless, they may have overlooked one or two facts, which may throw an entirely new colour over the whole subject.

It is true that Music is the sister art of Painting and Sculpture. True, also, that Music was the eldest born, since birds warbled, rivulets murmured, and winds sang psalms, long ere the hand of man was practised on canvas or marble.

True, too—we, be assured, shall not deny—that Music has a deeper sounding in the human heart, and exercises a far more powerful influence on mankind in general, than Painting or Sculpture. How, then, comes it to pass that, in the competition of the Fine Arts at the Exhibition of 1862, Music should have been altogether forgotten or disclaimed by the committee of gentlemen constituting the Royal Commissioners, all of whom, we may suppose, were selected for the liberality of their views and their practical knowledge in matters connected with art? Was Music purposely rejected—was it carelessly overlooked? Neither one nor the other. The Commissioners did not take Music into their consideration for the same reason that they did not take Poetry—another of the Fine-Art sisters. Music and Poetry address themselves to the understanding through the ears, although both may be perused in the closet. In the Exhibition of the Arts, all the competing works appeal to the eye, except in the case of musical instruments and bells, which, nevertheless, must, in the first instance, be adjudged by the sense of sight, and are sent indeed to be appraised in accordance with their good looks. Thus Music was not included in the Fine Arts Exhibition, because it was addressed to another sense than that for which the Exhibition was founded and constituted.

That musical compositions could be critically examined, like pictures and statues, is simply impossible, unless, indeed, money and time were of no account. A few glances—some taste and no great amount of knowledge—will suffice to pass a general opinion upon the achievements of painter and sculptor, and sundry general opinions will be found good enough to constitute a tolerably true estimate of the performance. A hundred paintings, and as many efforts of the chisel, may be inspected and reviewed in a single day. How long would it take merely to hear through one hundred pieces of music—operas, cantatas, oratorios, symphonies and concertos included—and, when heard, in what manner could an idea of their individual merits be obtained? We can easily comprehend the *rationale* of offering prizes for songs, ballads, glees, &c., and can believe that the best composition is most likely to attain the first award, since the work is simple, and easily appreciated at a hearing; but we cannot understand how several operas could be performed, or by what steam process of the mind the judges could come to a sound conclusion on the same day. Could any man trust his judgment under the circumstances? We think not. Besides, Music has many homes, and is not restricted to gallery or exhibition. The statue and the picture are fixtures, and can only be viewed in one place. The "Ecce Homo" or "Laocoon" may be represented by feeble copies far from the National Gallery or the Vatican; but the identical *Don Giovanni*, *Guillaume Tell*, *Messiah*, or *Elijah* may be performed in every city in the world at the same moment, and the composer "moult no feather" of his glory. The world, then, is the true Exhibition of Music, where, in innumerable art-palaces and humble cells, it is heard and prized by day and night in unceasing round, and where, far better than in some fixed locality, at some appointed time and in the presence of constituted jurists, with judgments precipitated and opinions blunted, it may meet its absolute merits and rewards. Let musicians, therefore, look beyond the Exhibition of the Fine Arts, and not grudge the poor brushman or stoneman his little perquisites and circumscribed area; and, in case of any difficulty being found with the removal of their fancied grievances, let them console themselves with remunerative anticipations of their well-to-do and most obliging publishers.

R.

A LEARNED Doctor (in Medicine), delivered a lecture, a short time since, upon "*the best means for restoring the voice when affected.*" He divided affections of the voice into three classes; the first, to be recognised by a chronic hoarseness of tone; the second, by trembling and uncertain intonation, and the third, by a difficulty in producing the sound. Whether a voice was altogether unhealthy, from violent inflammation of the mucous membranes, or from some defect in the larynx, could be easily known by means of the larynx-speculum—many cases of this description having been successfully treated by aid of this mechanical contrivance. If the hoarseness was merely the result of a slight cold, benefit might be derived from inhaling warm vapour, as recommended for the cure of stammering, by the ingenious Dr. Wolf. Singing must, meanwhile, be discontinued. The course recommended for attacks of the second class was not that usually adopted—namely, a cessation from singing and prolonged repose, but daily vocal practice, care being taken, however, not to force out the air, but to let it flow gently. If, in the midst of the scale, some of the tones should prove inconvenient to sustain, and sound only like howling, as was frequently the case with mezzo-sopranos, the reason was to be sought in the too great extension of the chest-notes upwards, and the best remedy, therefore, was the use of the *false* voice, in lower passages than usual. Finally, the third class owed its existence entirely to the practice of singing with a *palatal* tone. By the execution of high and impassioned music in this false voice, either the entire larynx was pushed on one side out of its position under the hyoid bone, or the natural pressure in the throat degenerated into a choking, and at last into a cramp of the muscles of the larynx themselves. To remedy a case of this kind, great care was necessary, though repose alone was not sufficient. What, also, was indispensable, was a proper system of employing the vocal muscles; in which case the use of eggs and lozenges was totally worthless.

Whether these speculations of the Berlin *Medicus* are of any value or not, they have a certain interest in the present day, when, from some cause or other, almost every singer's voice is as often "out of order" as the contrary. We do not believe that nature has given up producing fine voices, or that the vocal art is absolutely redescending the ladder of excellence. *Tempora mutantur*; that's half the truth: *nos mutamur*; that's the rest of it. The slang about "decay, &c.," is as old as art itself, and the croakers are mere narrow-minded pessimists, who have as little confidence in the inexhaustible resources of nature, as in the creed that man and his mental capabilities are susceptible of unbounded development. To no department of art is the croaking system more obstinately applied than to the vocal, whoever has had anything to do with which, during the last thirty or forty years, must have been almost worried to death by the complaint, that good voices were no longer to be found. But on what is it all based? If we examine the subject impartially, we shall find it rests on two facts: the first, that, as a general rule, those among our singers who possess good voices study less than their predecessors; and the second, that, in consequence of the heavy demands made upon them by "grand" operas, as now composed, their powers must be worn out sooner than formerly. We deny, emphatically, that nature, at the present day, is unable to furnish as many good voices as of old. It is not nature who is at fault, but singers, who more or less neglect the proper study of their art, and the means of keeping the vocal functions strong and healthy. First-class voices, vigorous, extended in register

agreeable in quality, even, flexible and lasting, have always been uncommon, just as they are now, and always will be; but, in the flourishing days of the vocal art, when thorough musicians and not *amateur physiologists* still taught singing, greater results were obtained from moderate resources than, at present, from the richest.

Q.

THE ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

SIR,—History is written sometimes after a strange fashion. Macaulay gravely prints a sermon which he contends ought to have been preached by some bishop, but which certainly was not taken down in short-hand. Macaulay drew upon his imagination for his theology. More recently we have a professed history of the United Netherlands, by Motley, during the sublime struggle of Protestantism against Papacy by the Dutch; but the students of that famed war of eighty years, who have derived their impressions from the writers of Holland, are astounded at the fanciful sketches of paltry personal traits, whilst the grand, noble, and magnanimous attributes of the Dutchmen themselves are quite secondary in Motley's estimation. Pardon me for entering a protest against a leading article in the MUSICAL WORLD of last week. If in 1861, musical history of events, which date only from 1846, is to be penned as the writer with the initial "R" has treated them, then must we look for the future for monstrosities more marked than even Burney and Hawkins have bequeathed to us, and we may anticipate associations more absurd than even those the living Fétis is conceiving. Is, then, the foundation of the Royal Italian Opera so remote, that the essential principle on which it was based can be soon forgotten? Was not the formation of that great lyric establishment entirely grounded on the universality of art? If it is pretended now that the Covent Garden Theatre in 1847 was opened for Italian opera "*pur et simple*" then was the opposition to Her Majesty's Theatre, one of the greatest musical frauds ever perpetrated, and a gross act of injustice was committed as regards its lessee, Mr. Lumley. Now, sir, whatever may be said of private vengeance, of personal pique, and of artistic antipathy, I claim for the originators of the Royal Italian Opera of 1847, higher aspirations and more elevated sentiments. The second Italian Opera House became a real want, an absolute necessity. Had it not been started, the lyric drama, instead of progressing, would have been thrown back for an indefinite period. The repertory would have been restricted to the wishy-washy Italian masters, and the executants would have been confined to the most inferior order of artists—vocal and orchestral. What the Royal Italian Opera has done for art in this country, has not been confined to the establishment itself—its influence has extended throughout the country by improved execution of works, sacred and secular, in truth, in the Cathedral, the Hall, and the Theatre. "R" does not propose then, I presume, that Covent Garden is to go back to Italian opera alone? Are Weber, Spohr, Glück, Beethoven, Auber, Hérold, Halévy, and Meyerbeer to be abandoned, and is the writer really serious in recommending us to go back to Paisiello and "Piccinni"?

"R" is of opinion that had Covent Garden possessed a Rubini, "French opera would not have been dreamt of." If this were true, then would Rossini's immortal *Guillaume Tell* have been shelved. "R" then makes the annexed astounding announcement:—

"Unfortunately for the perpetuation of pure Italian opera, Signor Mario had a larger intellect, a more plastic mind, and a more suscep-

ble organisation than even his illustrious predecessor; and with Signor Mario, we need hardly hint to our readers, originated, in a great measure, the foundation of French opera at Covent Garden."

The italics are our own, for "R" must have been mesmerised when he wrote the last paragraph, and his medium must have been a Macaulay or a Motley. Guizot was walking one day in the garden of the Foreign Office in Paris, as it existed when he was Prime Minister, and was deeply engaged in reading. "What book interests you so much?" said a friend to him. "I am reading a romance," replied Guizot, showing Thiers' *Révolution Française*. No fiction ever surpassed in fancy that of "R," in assigning to Mario the notion of founding French Opera at Covent Garden. Let me remind "R" of its antecedents. Neither the late Lenari, who was the first to contemplate a second Italian Opera House in London, nor Persiani and Galetti, ever had any scheme beyond that of having an *opera buffa* in opposition to Her Majesty's Theatre. The "idea" of an Opera House, using the Italian, the best language for singing, for the purpose of executing the works of all masters, *without distinction of country*, was my suggestion, as the only system calculated to spread the universality of art. It was the "idea" which Persiani adopted, and Costa endorsed; but as regards the carrying out of my original plan, the first opportunity of testing the sincerity of the Italian artists presented itself when the *Huguenots* was put in rehearsal, and from the Italians, one and all, the opposition to the first performance of that great work was most strenuous. The fame of Viardot's Valentina had reached the ears of the head of the Italian family, and Grisi, the permanency of whose hold on the public was so much secured subsequently by this very part, was not willing to afford her gifted rival the chance of distinction. Sir, I will not occupy your valuable space by details of the cabals, intrigues, and even conspiracies, set afloat to prevent the representation of Meyerbeer's masterpiece. Fortunately for art, and for the Italian artists themselves, for the *Huguenots* saved the Royal Italian Opera, the Queen "commanded" the first night, and the result is of course well known. The "*musique Chinoise*" of Meyerbeer has been more than once the salvation of the Royal Italian Opera. As for Mario, his Raoul, in the earlier performances, was that of the walking gentleman; but his "larger intellect," "plastic mind," and "susceptible organisation," which "R" refers to, were only developed, when accident afforded Roger, the French tenor, the opportunity of appearing in Raoul for the first time, and after that brilliant example Mario was Raoul, and Raoul was Mario.

C. L. GRUNEISEN.

16 Surrey Street, Strand, April 10, 1861.

HANOVER SQUARE ROOMS.—Herr Sigismund Blumner's *matinée*, on Wednesday last, attracted a very large audience. Herr Blumner is a pianist of decided merit. He possesses considerable power, and plays with equal correctness and fluency. His choice of Beethoven's trio in B flat, for piano, clarinet, and violoncello, in which he was assisted by Mr. Lazarus and Herr Wolhers, was a happy one, and the appreciation of his performance by the audience must have been highly gratifying to him. Herr Blumner showed his talent for composition in two agreeable solos, a *notturno* and a *mazurka*, which pleased very much. Herr Blumner also played another concerted piece with Messrs. Deichmann, Webb, Boileau, Wolhers, and Neuwirth, in the shape of an *allegro de concert* (by Charles Mayer), and concluded with a spirited performance of the march from *Tannhäuser*, arranged by Liszt, which highly taxed his executive powers. The vocalists were Miss Helen McLeod, a young and rising singer, and Mlle. Marie de Villar, whose "*Non piu di fiore*" (clarinet *obbligato*, Mr. Lazarus) deserves a word of praise. Herr Wilhelm Ganz accompanied the vocal music on the pianoforte.

MONDAY POPULAR CONCERTS.—The high repute in which Mr. Charles Hallé is held by the public was never more strongly manifested than at his benefit on Monday night in St. James's Hall. The long string of carriages in Regent Street, and the elegant tenants of the stalls, testified to the favour which Mr Hallé enjoys with the aristocratic patrons of art, while the crowded state of the area, orchestra, and galleries indicated no less clearly the estimation of the music-loving masses,—the latter term, as applied to the frequenters of the Monday Popular Concerts, meaning a body of thoroughly enthusiastic connoisseurs, always ready to do homage to good chamber-music, and more fully alive to its merits than perhaps any other audience in Europe. Mr. Charles Hallé's reputation as a pianist has been firmly established for many years in London no less than in Manchester, so long his head-quarters. Those who had the good fortune to visit the famous Art-Treasure Exhibition at the latter place in 1857 will not have forgotten how in the midst of the choicest paintings and the rarest objects of vertu, the sister art of music was not neglected (as it appears likely to be in the forthcoming show of '62); the compact band over which Mr. Charles Hallé presided, and the generally excellent material of which his programmes were composed, being not less creditable to his good taste, than his ability as a conductor. But still it is with the pianoforte that Mr. Charles Hallé's name will be most intimately associated, and on Monday night the reception accorded to the great pianist was of the warmest kind. If the selection was not altogether of the newest, it had, at any rate, the merit of being unexceptionally good; and the sonata in F minor, Op. 57 of Beethoven ("appassionata"), played without book, exhibited in an equal degree a wonderful command of the key-board, and his rare powers of memory. Mr. Hallé was recalled with enthusiasm at the end of this performance. Schubert's *Impromptu* in B flat, and Chopin's *valse* in A flat, were but trifles—and infringing the systematic order of the regular Monday scheme, to the minds of many—out of place. In better keeping was the melodious sonata duet in F major (Op. 24) for violin and pianoforte, in which the pianist divided the laurels with the violinist (M. Henri Vieuxtemps). The quaint *scherzo* afforded unqualified satisfaction, and was repeated by general desire. There was only one stringed quartet—that by Haydn, E major (Op. 59), given (for the second time this season) to perfection by M. Vieuxtemps, Ries, Schreurs and Paque—the last-named gentleman was a useful substitute for Signor Piatti. Mozart's quartet in G minor, for piano and strings, was the last instrumental piece. Nothing could have gone better. Miss Banks being prevented from appearing by indisposition, the weight of the vocal music fell upon Mr. Sims Reeves, who was in admirable voice, and gave "Dalla sua pace" with the utmost grace and delicacy, his finished style and artistic phrasing being beyond praise. Mendelssohn's "Hunter's song" (first introduced here by Mr. Reeves) was delivered with such characteristic spirit, that there was no alternative left but to repeat it, in accordance with the unanimous wish of the delighted audience. On Monday, at the 58th concert, Mendelssohn's *Ottet* will be given for the last time this season, and as a fit pendant Spohr's double quartet in E minor, which pleased so much on two occasions last season.

MUSICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.—The second concert, on Wednesday evening last, was a perfect triumph. The first part consisted of Mendelssohn's *First Walpurgis Night*, and Mozart's "Posthumous" Concerto in C, for pianoforte. The imaginative and poetical work of Mendelssohn, originally written when the composer was in his 21st year, was almost entirely reconstructed, after an interval of fourteen years, and introduced to the public in 1843. Since that time it has been repeatedly given in London, and at all the great musical festivals of England and Germany, and has invariably created the most profound sensation. The legend upon which Goethe's poem is based is simplicity itself, and for the edification of those of our readers who are unacquainted with it, we cannot do better than subjoin the following explanation:—

"The German legend that witches and evil spirits assembled on the night of the first of May (Walpurgis-night) on the summit of the Hartz mountains, is said to have originated in the heathen time, when the Christians tried by force to prevent the Druids from observing their accustomed rites of sacrificing in the open air and on the hills. The

Druids are said to have placed watches round their mountains, who, with their dreadful appearance hovering round the fires, and clashing their weapons, frightened the enemy, and the ceremonies were proceeded with. On this tradition Goethe founded the poem."

The principal solos of the Druid priest were powerfully declaimed by Mr. Weiss, Mad. Laura Baxter giving the short but difficult bit for the "aged woman of the people" most effectively, and Mr. George Perren, in the tenor music, atoning for any shortcoming of power by careful and conscientious singing. A professional chorus of eighty voices lent their aid to the orchestra; and, taken altogether, the performance was perhaps the best that has ever been heard in England. Of Mr. John Francis Barnett, the readers of the *Musical World* are not ignorant, nor of our opinions as to his talent as pianist, which indeed are remarkable. He played the concerto of Mozart most admirably, and introduced a cadenza at the end of the first *allegro* in excellent taste, and in perfect keeping with the subject. Mr. Barnett, we believe, is earnestly devoting himself to composition, and is about to submit some new works to public approval. The sooner the better.

The second part opened with Beethoven's Symphony (No. 4) in B flat, the performance of which would have been irreproachable but that the second *adagio* was a little accelerated. The scena "Si lo sento," from Spohr's *Faust*, was charmingly sung by Miss Louisa Pyne, who also joined Messrs. Perren and Weiss in the graceful trio from Mr. John Barnett's *Fair Rosamond*. Macfarren's characteristic and highly dramatic overture to *Cherry Chase* brought to a conclusion one of the best concerts we ever attended. That this result is in a very great measure attributable to the indefatigable zeal and energy of the conductor, Mr. Alfred Mellon, every one must admit. Fine as was the band during the first two seasons, it is this year even better. The society numbers among its members most of the musical celebrities of the day, and as a *sine qua non* to admission in its ranks is a knowledge of music, the audience is at once the most critical and appreciative to be found in (or out of) the metropolis. The genuine and hearty applause of such hearers is something more than a mere ordinary compliment.

Miss STEELE gave a concert of sacred music (the first of a series of two) at Messrs. Collard's Rooms, on Saturday last, which was well attended by the patrons and admirers of this esteemed professor. Miss Steele sang with her accustomed taste and expression an *aria* from Handel's *Saul* ("O Lord, whose mercies"); a clever duet by Mrs. Mounsey Bartholomew, with Mad. Ferrari ("A song of Spring"); with Mr. Benson a duet from Spohr's *Last Judgment* ("Forsake me not"); a song by Herr Freyer; and again a duet with Mad. Ferrari, "O lovely peace" (Handel); as well as Mendelssohn's unaccompanied quartet, "When the west," and a trio by Curschman. The fair vocalist therefore did not spare herself, and the well-merited applause she received must have repaid her for her exertions. Mad. Ferrari deserves a word of praise, apart from her beautiful singing in an "Ave Maria" by Cherubini, in which she enjoyed the invaluable co-operation of Signor Piatti, the violoncello *obbligato*. Mr. Benson and Mr. Lewis Thomas both acquitted themselves satisfactorily, Mr. Thomas's fine bass voice telling well in the "Pro peccatis," from Rossini's *Stabat Mater*. Besides Signor Piatti, who, by the by, played a quaint sonata for violoncello by Boccherini, Miss Steele had secured the services of Mr. Charles Hallé, who played, with Signor Piatti, Mendelssohn's Sonata (in D) for piano and violoncello, as well as some of the *Lieder ohne Worte*, in his usual admirable manner. The accompanist at the pianoforte was Mr. Harold Thomas, an excellent pianist and thorough musician.

VOCAL ASSOCIATION.—At the next concert (Wednesday), which, as usual, will be under the direction of Mr. Benedict, besides the first appearance of M. Ole Büll, the celebrated violinist, Miss Louisa Pyne will make her first appearance at the concerts of the Vocal Association this season. The choir, which consists of 200 voices, will repeat, by particular desire, Meyerbeer's setting of the "Lord's Prayer" (Pater-Noster), and Webb's descriptive glee, "When winds breathe soft." The programme thus presents more than ordinary attractions.

The Operas.

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA.—*Rigoletto*, besides being Verdi's best opera, must always exercise a strong attraction while Signor Ronconi is at hand to play the court-buffoon. A more striking and original impersonation has rarely been witnessed on the lyric boards; and so wonderful is the force with which the various situations are portrayed, that the spectator, lost in the dramatic interest of the scene, is at times almost tempted to forget he is witnessing a musical performance at all. Not that Signor Ronconi lacks the vocal skill to impart significance to the everywhere characteristic melody which Verdi has put into the mouth of Rigoletto; on the contrary—as all frequenters of the Italian Opera are aware—although he now and then sings out of tune, especially at the commencement of the evening (like Persiani and others who could be named); and although his voice was never remarkable either for strength or richness of quality, his manner of phrasing is derived from the most honoured traditions of the Italian school, his execution is fluent and unlaboured, his modulation of tone invariably natural, and his cadence rounded and balanced to perfection; in fact, that, with physical shortcomings which might have succumbed before anything short of genius, he is still a genuine singer, a thorough master of expression, and as successful in the play of tender emotion as in those outbursts of passion of which his *Chevreuse*, in *Maria di Rohan* affords so frequent and signal examples. In the delineation of the fate-struck jester Signor Ronconi's peculiar talent has full scope. The forced merriment of the earlier scenes, where Rigoletto, whose nature and intellect are of a far more elevated order than his master's, is compelled to put on the obsequiousness of a parasite and the frivolity of a mountebank for that master's recreation and caprice; the sudden shock—as of mental paralysis—that follows the curse of the old nobleman at whom he has scoffed in the moment of misfortune; the first interview with Gilda, in which his affectionate anxiety for the only being on earth with whom he sympathises, is so exquisitely conveyed through the injunction to Giovanna:—

"Veglia, o donna, questo fiore
Che a te puro confidai;"

the despair at finding he has been entrapped by the Duke's retainers into unwittingly aiding and abetting in the abduction of his own daughter; the sequel, where the miserable dupe, awakened to the infamy that has been enacted, once more assumes his legitimate functions as Court buffoon, while his heart is overwhelmed with solicitude about the fate of his child; the after-scene, in which that child is restored to him, under the suspicion of dishonour, from which she can never again be freed; and the terrible catastrophe, when, a second time duped, he is balked of revenge by the escape of his intended victim, and the murder of the luckless Gilda, who, unknown to Rigoletto, has sacrificed herself to save her faithless lover; these, one and all, present opportunities for the exercise of that dramatic talent which Signor Ronconi possesses in so eminent a degree, and which he never employed with more consummate effect than on Tuesday night, when *Rigoletto* was represented for the first time this season. As an exhibition of vocal power, his performance was more than usually unequal; but as a display of histrionic art it was throughout irreproachable. Mad. Miolan Carvalho (who, like Signor Ronconi, made her first appearance) sang the music allotted to Gilda—than which Verdi has written nothing more genial and expressive—with the finish, grace, and brilliancy of execution which last season elicited such hearty and unanimous approval. She "looked" the part, moreover, to admiration, and in her acting there was an unobtrusive gentleness that could not fail to excite interest. Mad. Nantier Didiée was Maddalena, and Signor Tagliafico Sparafucile—both (how often have we had to say as much) in an equal degree lifelike and effective, natural and picturesque. It was no enviable task for Signor Neri Balardi to come after Signor Mario as the Duke of Mantua—with "La donna e mobile," &c. He did his utmost, however, and sang the music correctly and well. The only "encore" during the opera was the admirable quartet in the last scene ("Un di, se ben rammentomi"); but after the duet between Gilda and Rigoletto, at the end of the second (third) act, Mad. Miolan

Carvalho and Signor Ronconi were summoned before the curtain and applauded with enthusiasm.

The opera was followed by the *divertissement* of *Les Amours de Diane*, in which a new dancer—Mademoiselle Salvioni—exhibited considerable strength, agility, and grace as Diana, and was loudly applauded.

On Thursday night the new tenor, Signor Tiberini, made his first appearance, as Ferdinando, in *La Favorita*, and met with unqualified success. He was greatly applauded in the opening romance; still more so in the scene where Ferdinando defies the King and rejects the honours which have been the price of his disgrace (Act III.); and most of all in the last scene, the well-known "Spirto gentil" (or "Angiol d'amore," as it is indifferently styled) being encored with enthusiasm. We must defer our remarks upon the voice of Signor Tiberini, together with his general capabilities as singer and actor, until after the second performance, which is announced to take place this evening. This will, moreover, enable us either to verify or correct first impressions, and thus to offer our musical readers a fairer and more dispassionate opinion. It is enough at present to chronicle the unanimously favourable verdict of the audience. In the actual dearth of good tenor singers the appearance of one of more than average pretensions is not to be dismissed summarily as a commonplace event.

Mad. Csillag undertook the character of Leonora for the first time in England, and M. Faure—whose engagement proved so satisfactory last season—reassumed that of the King. Both were eminently successful. The subordinate parts of Baldassare, Inez, and Gasparo were sustained by M. Zelger, Mad. Tagliafico, and Signor Rossi; and Mlle. Salvioni was chief dancer in the *divertissement*. The opera went off with spirit from beginning to end, and after each successive act the principal singers were recalled before the curtain.

COLOGNE.—After playing at Düsseldorf and Bonn, Ole Bull gave two concerts in the theatre here.

KÖNIGSBERG.—*Genovefa von Brabant*, *Das Glückchen des Eremiten*, *Wintermärchen*, and *Santa Chiara*, are among the novelties, and bear testimony to the energy displayed by the management.

SONDERHAUSEN.—Herr Dorn's *Niebelungen* was produced for the first time on the occasion of the Princess Elizabeth's birthday, and repeated two days subsequently, when the operatic season terminated. It was highly successful. A telegraphic message was forwarded to the composer, inviting him to conduct the second performance himself, but, to the great regret of every one, he was unable to do so.

Provincial.

THE letter signed "Well-wisher to the Festival," which we copied in our provincial news last week from the *Leeds Intelligencer*, has brought us the following reply from one of the Festival Committee:—

To the Editor of the MUSICAL WORLD.

"SIR,—An injudicious letter, copied into your columns last week from the *Leeds Intelligencer*, has caused considerable surprise amongst those gentlemen whom the misstatements therein made more immediately concern—I mean the Leeds Festival Committee. Unhappily, in this town anonymous assertions, far removed from actual truth, are so common amongst a certain class of musical people, that refutation in the local papers is considered of no avail; therefore it is that the letter alluded to has not been answered in the *Intelligencer*. But as it has been transferred to a journal which circulates largely amongst musicians, I deem it right to ask your leave to reply to some of the statements therein contained. The writer of the letter is at great pains to laud the 'Yorkshire Choral Union' as 'the finest choral body in the kingdom;' but those who understand what part-singing really is, very justly question this position, and ask, Where is the proof that they are so? Sir, the members of this union, self-lauded to a sickening degree, as it is, have sung in Leeds several times during the season, and on every occasion they have performed one set of glees (!) and part-songs only. Beyond simple, easily-learned pieces, they have not gone, and the Festival Committee very properly say—At our festival we want something beyond this, and even supposing that there are other

advantages in engaging this choir, we are not at all sure that it is competent for the work. Leaving this point, I ask you, sir, if it would be judicious, fair, or creditable for the committee to exclude from the Leeds Festival about 100 first-rate Leeds chorus-singers, for that they would do, if the mis-named 'Well-wisher to the Festival' could have his way. Are there better singers in Sheffield and Halifax than in Leeds and Bradford? I unhesitatingly say—No. Then upon what principle of fair play and justice and economy would the committee act if they listened to the counsels of interested persons, and engaged the Yorkshire Choral Union, *per se*?

"In a financial point of view, the engagement of as many Leeds singers as can be procured would be highly advantageous, and I very much doubt the *bona fides* of 'A Well-wisher to the Festival' when he urges the engagement of more than 200 chorus-singers from Sheffield, Halifax, and Huddersfield.

"The concluding paragraph in the letter is totally unfounded, for the Bradford Festival in 1859 more singers were engaged from Leeds than any other town out of Bradford and the immediate district.

"I sincerely hope that for the Leeds Festival a Leeds chorus will be engaged—for that will bring honour to the town, and increase the funds which I trust will be raised for the various charitable institutions who seek to be benefited by the Triennial Festival of 1861.

"Your obedient servant,

"ONE OF THE FESTIVAL COMMITTEE."

This is, perhaps, the place to refer to another letter which was addressed to another Leeds paper more than two months ago, but which is worth attention even now:—

LEEDS MUSICAL FESTIVAL—BREAKERS AHEAD!

(To the Editor of the Leeds and West Riding Express.)

"Sir,—In the Bradford Observer of yesterday (Thursday) I find the following paragraph:—LEEDS MUSICAL FESTIVAL.—Mr. R. S. Burton was appointed Festival Chorus Master on Saturday last. Out of a large committee, six only voted for him—two against him, the remainder (the majority) abstained from voting. A resolution was proposed that the Bradford Festival Choral Society should be applied to for extra singers; but Mr. Burton's friends, headed by Mr. Walker Joy, opposed it might and main, and it was lost by the casting vote of the chairman."

"Surely this must be a mis-statement of the actual facts; for no one can believe that the Leeds Festival Committee could be so short-sighted to their own interest to allow such an illiberal decision to be arrived at, as that of shutting out Bradford singers from our Festival! I am given to understand that the Halifax and Huddersfield Choral Societies are to be invited to sing in the chorus; but most sincerely do I hope that vocalists will not be brought from any neighbouring town before every available singer in our borough is engaged. Let us not have a repetition of the singular conduct practised at our first festival, when many most excellent Leeds chorus singers were refused engagements, to make room for singers from a distance, at about three times the cost. If the paragraph quoted above be untrue, it behoves the Leeds Festival Committee at once to contradict it. If correct, I fear we shall lose a considerable amount of that support from Bradford which, as a music-loving town, it would be sure to give us."

"Leeds, Jan. 25, 1861.

"Yours, &c., A LEEDS SINGER."

We shall have something to say very shortly on this subject, which, however, will find its proper place in our leading columns.

A grand performance of the *Messiah* was given at the Town Hall of Leeds, on Tuesday evening, the 2nd. The solo vocalists were Mrs. Sunderland, Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington, Miss Freeman, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Winn. The chorus was the Yorkshire Choral Union. M. Lemmens presided at the organ. On the previous night, in the same locality, Mr. Burton gave his fourth dress concert, when the same singers assisted. The Leeds *Intelligencer* has a long account of both performances, but offers nothing to quote. Mrs. Sunderland and Mad. Sherrington have no preference for the writer, and both are highly eulogised. Mr. Sims Reeves of course is praised, and congratulated for the passion and pathos of his singing in "Hatton's" (query, "Balfé's") "Come into the garden, Maud." Of M. Lemmens's performance on the organ, the *Intelligencer* thus writes:—

"Next came an organ solo by M. Lemmens, who is styled 'the great continental organist,' a title which, we have no doubt, he well deserves; for in this and another solo, both his own compositions, he showed some fine manipulation and good taste. Unfortunately, from some cause unknown to us, the stops of the organ appeared out of

order, or he required assistance in cyphering them, when he performed the first solo; but in despite of that annoying circumstance, he played with great feeling and power, and his second solo, when the difficulties just adverted to had been removed, was a very brilliant and arduous performance. It was very warmly re-demanded—a compliment he gracefully acknowledged, but did not comply with."

This evening Mlle. Titiens and Signor Giuglini are announced to sing at the Town Hall, under the auspices of the Town Hall Concert Society; and on Monday Mad. Alboni and Miss Arabella Goddard, and other artists (the Willert-Beale "tourists") will appear.

Mr. Willert Beale's provincial tour-party would appear to have made a brilliant "hit" at CHELTENHAM, if we may judge from the following account of the morning and evening concerts, given by Messrs. Hale and Sons, at the Assembly Rooms on the 9th inst., and which we borrow from the *Cheltenham Times*:—

"The programme of the morning's entertainment was most excellent, containing some choice *morceaux* of both the Italian and English schools. Miss Arabella Goddard did not play Mozart's Concerto in C, as expected (the concerto requiring full orchestral accompaniments), but she did play, in her own exquisite manner, some of Mendelssohn's *Lieder ohne Worte*, 'Where the bee sucks,' by Benedict, 'The last rose of Summer,' by Thalberg, and a *Duo Concertante*, with Regondi, on airs from the *Huguenots*. If it were possible, we should almost be inclined to say that Miss Goddard plays better than ever. Mad. Alboni was in charming voice, and her rich *contralto* notes, came out to advantage in the aria from *Semiramide*, 'Ah! quel giorno.' Her execution of 'Non più mesta' is just as wonderful as ever, and—as an encore to this—she gave the ever-welcome *Brindisi* from *Lucrezia Borgia*. Signor Regondi, without exception one of the most pleasing solo players of the day, played with great taste and finish, on his two instruments, the concertina and the guitar; indeed, on neither of which has he ever been equalled. Mlle. Sedlatzek and Signor Cosselli, were great aids in the success of the concert, the former in Schubert's song, 'Dein ist mein Herz,' the latter in Rossini's buffo song, 'A Maometto,' being most effective."

"In the evening the Assembly Rooms were again the resort of the elite and fashion of Cheltenham and the neighbourhood, and again the principal artists shone out brightly, as 'stars' of the first magnitude. Miss Arabella Goddard was loudly applauded after the performance of Benedict's new and brilliant *fantasia* (composed expressly for her), 'Albion' (on 'Pray Goody,' and 'Come if you dare'), and an 'encore' being unanimously called for, she played Thalberg's 'Home sweet home.' In the second pianoforte solo, the magnificent *Mosé* of Thalberg, was really a marvellous performance. Added to these three solos, Miss Goddard played a *Duo Concertante* with Regondi, on airs from *Oberon*, one of the gems of the evening. Mad. Alboni treated her audience in the first place to Rode's air, when, notwithstanding the extreme difficulty of this performance and the wondrous exertion she displayed, an 'encore' was demanded. The lady bowed twice and retired, but, finding the demand continued so urgently, she came back, and again introduced the *Brindisi*, to the delight of the audience. She also sang the *Tyrolienne* from *Betty*, 'In questo semplice,' in so charming a manner, that once more the listeners were anxious to hear more. Again the applause continued loud and long. Again Alboni appeared to bow her acknowledgments, but this time she respectfully, though firmly, declined to comply. Signor Regondi performed a *fantasia* (concertina) on airs from the *Traviata*, and a 'Reverie,' of his own composition, on the guitar. Mlle. Sedlatzek, and Mad. Alboni, gave an exceedingly pretty duet, by Goldberg (the conductor); while the quintet from *Marie Stuart*, in which 'Auld lang syne' is introduced, was effective in the hands of all the performers. Signor Cosselli brought forward an air from *Mathilde di Shabran*; Mr. Land sang very humourously and ver sweetly, a pretty ballad, by Hutton, having, reference to the visit of a lover to his sweetheart. Herr Goldberg performed his duties as accompanist most satisfactorily, and we may safely assert that both morning and evening concerts were by far the most successful of the season."

The first appearance this season of Mlle. Titiens and Signor Giuglini in England took place at the third subscription concert of the LIVERPOOL Philharmonic on Tuesday evening, and constitutes, we need hardly say, our most important intelligence from the country. The magnificent *prima donna* and the "golden-voiced" tenor were received with all the usual honours by (vide the *Daily Post*) "a brilliant and fashionable assemblage." The programme was made up of the old tit-bits of the London concert-

room, grateful no doubt to Liverpoolian auriculars. Signor Giuglini, in Balfé's "Tu m'amì" ("When other lips"), produced the greatest effect of the evening. Mlle. Titiens sang the air of Alice—Jenny Lind's air—"Vanne disse" ("Va, dit-elle"), from *Robert le Diable*—"a bird-like aria" (vide *Post*) from Signor Verdi's *Sicilian Vespers* (query the bolero?), besides singing duets and trios with Signor Giuglini and M. Gassier, who filled the place of Signor Violett, detained at Paris by indisposition. The Gallic barytone is evidently a great favourite with the *Post*, who thus apostrophises him:—

"M. Gassier began flat, as he too frequently does, but soon gave play to his magnificent voice, which was again, we may now say, very conspicuous in 'Deh vieni' from *Don Giovanni*, in 'La ci darem' from the same opera, remarkably so in the trio 'Qual volutta,' from *I Lombardi*, and again in 'Non più andrai,' which, with everything connected with the ubiquitous *Figaro*, falls within this artist's peculiar province."

From *HEREFORD* we learn that Mr. Townsend Smith's preparations for the forthcoming meeting of the three choirs are completed. The subjoined is abridged from the *Hereford Times* of April 6th:—

"The festival will, as usual, be held in the Cathedral and Shire Hall, and take place on September 10th and three following days. Full choral service by the members of the choirs of Hereford, Gloucester, and Worcester daily at half-past eight. The sermon on Tuesday by the Rev. Canon Musgrave. First morning *Elijah*; second morning the *Last Judgment* and the principal part of *Sampson*; third morning 'Spring' from Haydn's *Seasons*, Mozart's 'Requiem,' and Mendelssohn's 'Hymn of praise'; fourth morning the *Messiah*, without the omissions generally made. First evening concert, overture *Euryanthe*, *Pastoral Symphony*, flute solo; second concert, overture *Anacraon*, Cherubini, *Italian Symphony*, violin solo; third concert, overtures *Wood Nymphs* (Sterndale Bennett), *Guillaume Tell*, Benedict's *Undine*. A concert of chamber music will be given at the College Hall on Friday evening, commencing at about seven and terminating before nine, thus preventing any interference with the grand ball at the Shire Hall. The ball, after the concert on the second evening, will be abandoned, it being impossible to prepare the room for dancing until nearly midnight; added to which the immense attractions procured, at a much greater outlay than on former occasions, necessarily causes the wish to gratify the public by giving as many opportunities as possible for hearing Mlle. Titiens, Miss Louisa Pyne, Mad. Weiss, Mad. Sain-ton-Dolby, Miss Susan Pyne, Mr. Sims Reeves, Signor Giuglini, Mr. Montem Smith, Mr. Winn, and Mr. Weiss. The instrumental band has been increased, not only in numbers but in talent, Mr. Blagrove principal violin. The utmost care has been used in the selection of the chorus, so as to preserve the high character of the musical performances in 1858. A programme composed of finer works has never yet been issued."

A correspondent writes from RICHMOND-ON-THE-THAMES, as follows:—

"An amateur concert was given on Monday evening in the National School Room for the benefit of the poor of Richmond, which we trust answered the expectations, in a pecuniary point of view, of the charitable promoters, who, with the assistance of four of the choristers from the Temple, got through an excellent programme in a highly creditable manner. There were so many pieces given that we can only name a few that elicited more than usual approval. The vocal pieces were Pearsall's 'O, who will o'er the downs?' and Miss Stirling's 'All among the barley,' sung by all the company, both of which were deservedly encored; an unaccompanied duet 'Could a man be secure,' sung by the Messrs. Robinson; a *trio bouffe* by M. Offenbach (solo by Mr. Robinson), also encored; and Benedict's popular romanza, 'Ange Adoré,' sung with great expression by Mr. Robinson, who does infinite credit to his instructor, Signor Ferrari. Two of the Temple choristers sang Mendelssohn's 'Greeting,' and deserved a word of praise. The instrumental part of the concert devolved on two amateurs, Mr. Straton (pianist), who played with considerable ability a *scherzo* by Chopin; and Mr. Hudson (violinist), who displayed his talent in a solo by De Beriot. The performance of a pianoforte quartet by Mozart (in G minor) must not pass without eulogy. The slow movement, remarkably well played, was warmly applauded."

The Principality seems to be commencing its harmonious season, if we may judge by the following notice of a concert recently given at Brecon, and which we have abridged from the *Brecon Journal*:—

"An amateur concert in aid of the Band fund of the 1st Company

of the Breconshire Volunteer Rifles took place at the Town Hall, Brecon, on the evening of Wednesday last. A spacious gallery extending the full length of the hall was erected on one side, and this and every other part of the room, which was very tastefully decorated with banners, &c., was densely crowded. The first and second parts opened with a performance by the band of the Brecon Rifles, who acquitted themselves creditably. 'The Hardy Norseman,' first in the selection of vocal pieces, was followed by a song from Major Rolls, who with a good tenor voice, gave an air from *Marta*. Mr. Brinley Richards then performed a Grand Fantasia on *Lucia di Lammermoor*, with great brilliancy and precision. Next came a vocal trio of his composition, 'Up, quit thy bower,' sung by the church choir of Llangasty Talyllyn, and accompanied by the composer, which elicited a unanimous encore. The Volunteer Glee Club sang 'Roderick Vich Alpine,' the solos being assigned to Masters W. Thomas and J. Grant of the Talyllyn Choir, and Messrs. Griffiths and Bell of the Rifles. Hood's 'Young Ben,' sung by Mr. Bell with characteristic humour, was also encored. Bishop's Glee, 'Foresters,' followed by selections from *Il Trovatore*, concluded the first part. In the second part, the 'Chough and Crow,' sung with much spirit, received as it deserved an encore. In the bass solo Serjeant Lilly showed himself possessed of an excellent voice and considerable taste. Mr. Richards reappeared with selections from Mendelssohn, than which better music could not have been heard. Major Rolls acquitted himself admirably in a little ballad, by Miss Hay, 'The Summer Bloom,' which was unanimously re-demanded. Willis's Glee, 'Merrily goes the bark,' was well sung, but too fast. Mr. Richards' 'Rule Britannia,' was one of the gems of the evening, artistic and popular in its style, calculated alike to display his talent as a composer, and his brilliant execution as a pianist. It was enthusiastically encored; but in place of repeating it, Mr. Richards gave a piece on Welsh airs, which was received as a compliment to the principality (Mr. Richards is a Welshman), and honoured with great applause. Mr. Bell, being encored in 'Ben Battle' (words by Tom Hood), gave the comic song of the 'Flying Dutchman.' The second part ended with an adaptation from Martin Henry's 'God preserve our Queen,' which served as an introduction to the National Anthem, 'God save the Queen.' The concert, on the whole, was eminently successful. Mr. Bell, bandmaster, conducted, the Rev. T. B. Hosken accompanied the glees and solos. At the end of the concert, Mr. John Lloyd proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Richards, Mr. Hosken, and the others who had taken part, which was responded to by three cheers. The proceeds of the concert amount to 50l."

VOCAL ASSOCIATION.—The second Subscription Concert came off on the evening of Wednesday, the 3rd inst. Mendelssohn's setting of the Psalm, "Hear my prayer," Mozart's motett, "Ave verum," Meyerbeer's "Lord's Prayer," Bach's corale, "Oh, let us praise the Lord," together with Morley's madrigal, "Say, gentle nymph," Webb's glee, "When winds breathe soft," and Mr. Benedict's hunting-song, "Rise, sleep no more," afforded the choir ample opportunity of exhibiting their skill. In general, the pieces went exceedingly well, Mendelssohn's Psalm being perhaps entitled to first honours, something of which, however, was due to the solos being taken by Mad. Lemmens-Sherrington. The other singers were Miss Messent, Miss Augusta Thomson, and Sig. Gambogi. The gentleman, we presume, from his name, is an Italian. His singing of "Fra poco" did not absolutely declare to what country he belonged. M. Lemmens played a fugue of his own composition on the organ, proving himself an excellent composer and a first-rate executant at the same time. M. Sain-ton played one of Beethoven's two romances for the violin—that in F, and decidedly the best—and a new Scotch fantasia of his own composition, introducing the airs "Auld Robin Gray" and "Duncan Gray cam' here to woo," in the most masterly and brilliant manner, winning enthusiastic applause in each. Miss Eleanor Ward, the young pianist, executed Fumagalli's *Danse des Sylphes* with the utmost grace and neatness, and was unanimously recalled. The Hall was exceedingly full.

LIEGNITZ.—A series of soirées for classical music has been established here, under the direction of Herr Bilse. At the fifth concert the first three pieces were by our greatest composers, viz. Haydn's G major Symphony (No. 7), Mozart's overture, to the *Zauberflöte*, and Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. The last composition selected for the evening's entertainment was a "Fest-Ouverture" by Herr Hugo Ulrich.

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| 2. Ave Maria. | 5. The praise of Tears. |
| 3. Adieu. | 6. Thine is my heart. |

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